



 News Story

Touring 3 National Championship Goes to Runoffs Rookie Spaude

 Club Racing
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Photo: John Steflik

TOPEKA, Kan. (Oct. 10, 2008) – In his first visit to the SCCA National Championship Runoffs, Bret Spaude, of Bushnell, Fla., earned the Touring 3 title, following a race-long battle with Kevin Fandozzi, of St. Joseph, Mo. Fandozzi would finish second followed by Bob Boileau, of Monument, Colo.

Starting fourth, Spaude got a great start, rocketing to second in his No. 12 TS Racing Inc. Chevrolet Cobalt SS. Fandozzi, however, got an even better start and managed to pull a gap of nearly one and half seconds on Spaude before the two came back around to begin lap two.

As the pair broke away from the rest of the field, Spaude made up ground quickly, catching Fandozzi on lap eight. From that point forward, it was a nose-to-tail battle for the lead between Spaude and Fandozzi's No. 34 Hoosier Tire Chevrolet Cobalt. Spaude pulled alongside Fandozzi numerous times exiting Turn 14, but it wasn't until the second-to-last lap that Spaude was able to make it stick all the way through Turn Two.

A bobble by Fandozzi on the final lap meant Spaude would sail to the checkered flag unchallenged, taking his first National Championship by 2.743 seconds over Fandozzi, who was able to set a new Runoffs race lap record of 1:49.765 during the 18-lap race.

"We worked all year and had some problems at the beginning with the car, figured out the problems, raced the car, and had a good feeling coming into here," Saude said. "Practice was good, the whole week just turned out to be really good, and it feels great to do something that not many people get to do on their first try.

"The start was crazy," recalled Spaude. "[Fandozzi] got out pretty far, and everything just funneled down real quick. Nobody was really giving much room, it was really just a squeeze fest in the first turn or two.

"I was behind [Fandozzi] a second or two for the first five or six laps. I could tell his tires were going away a little bit toward the end. The track kind of got a little loose on us and I could tell, just in certain braking areas, that I was just a little bit better. That's where I took my jabs and they ended up finishing, down on the other side of the track."

After getting caught up in some early battles, Boileau clawed his way through the field to take the final podium spot in the No. 43 Hoosier/1-800-FIGHT-MS Honda S2000.

Chad Gilsinger, of Marysville, Ohio, finished fourth in the No. 07 BFGoodrich/H&R/Traqmate Honda S2000. He was followed by the No. 4 Old Dominion Metals/Kumho/Red Line Honda S2000 of Rob Hines, from Arlington, Va.

Eric Van Cleef, of Huntsville, Ala., earned the Sunoco Hard Charger Award in the No. 84 Kumho Tires/Mazda Motorsports Mazda RX-8. Van Cleef advanced five positions in the race.

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